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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003000

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/19/2025

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: ASSASSINS MURDER ONE SUNNI ARAB CONSTITUTION
COMMITTEE MEMBER, ONE ADVISOR, AND THEIR DRIVER

REF: BAGHDAD 2953

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert Ford.
Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

1. (C) Gunmen assassinated Sunni Arab constitution committee member Mujbil Shaykh Issa, Sunni Arab expert advisor Dhamin Aleiwi al-Ubaidi and their driver Aziz Isma'eel in Baghdad on July 19. The three men were headed to a restaurant in the Karada neighborhood of Baghdad and had left the International Zone shortly beforehand after a full day of constitution-related meetings. Issa and al-Ubaidi were friends and had worked together as law professors at Kirkuk University. Both men were members and nominees of the National Dialogue Council. Their assassination comes after two Sunni Arab supplemental members had previously withdrawn from the committee, reportedly in part after receiving threats (see reftel). Two hardline National Dialogue Council members, Abd al-Naser al-Janabi and Fakhri Qaisi, replaced those two members officially this week.

2. (C) Word of the assassination came in the midst of a constitution committee meeting and PolOff ran into the members as they emerged after hearing the news. They were stricken but defiant. SCIRI member Akram al-Hakim said he believed the Sunnis deserved "five times" more security support than the rest of the members, but he said he thought the decision to go to a restaurant unguarded was foolish. Sunni Arab supplemental member Shaykh Muhammad Abed Rabbo al-Jaburi was angry that he and his colleagues have not been given the same Iraqi-government funded security package as the rest of the TNA members -- each of whom is budgeted for 10 guards. Jaburi and others acknowledged that Mujbil Shaykh Issa traveled unguarded. One journalist remarked to PolOff that Issa had bragged to her that very afternoon that he could move comfortably among even insurgents in Iraq.

3. (C) COMMENT: This assassination is unlikely to spark a withdrawal by Sunni Arab delegates -- Jaburi, for example, was cordial and committed even following the incident. Similarly, we have heard committee member Abdel Nasser al-Janabi reiterate several times that despite threats to his life he would not stop his engagement in the political process. The killings, however, likely will lead them emphasize the pressure they are under and the limits of their maneuvering room.

4. (U) REO HILLA, REO BASRA, REO MOSUL, and REO KIRKUK, minimize considerd.

Satterfield